

**Q1: When do I need a building permit?**

**A:** A Building Permit and engineered plans are required for fences taller than 7 feet. An encroachment permit is required for fences and walls in the public right-of-way (see Q7 and Q8 below for more info).

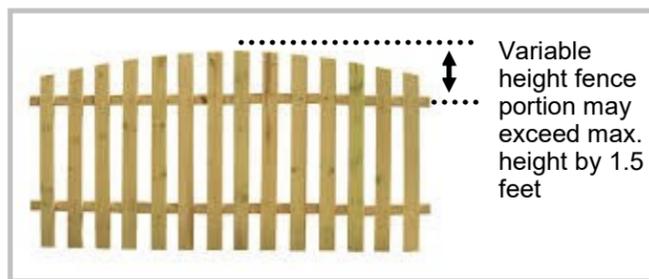
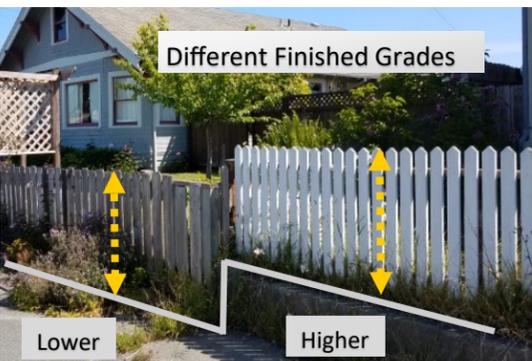
**Q2: What kind of fence can I build?**

**A:** Solid or open fences are allowed. Open fences must be at least 70% open to the passage of light and air.



**Q3: How do I measure my fence?**

**A:** Measure the vertical distance from the highest finished grade at the base of the fence to the top edge of the fence (height includes any materials directly attached to it). If the fence height varies due to design features, the fence may exceed the allowed height by a maximum of one-foot six-inches (1.5 feet).



# FENCES AND WALLS

Are you constructing a new fence or replacing an existing fence?

If so, this information is for you!

Eureka's Zoning Code regulates fences and walls, and was updated in September 2020. Section 155.320 regulates fence material, height and location, based on your zone district.

**Q4: How tall can my fence be?**

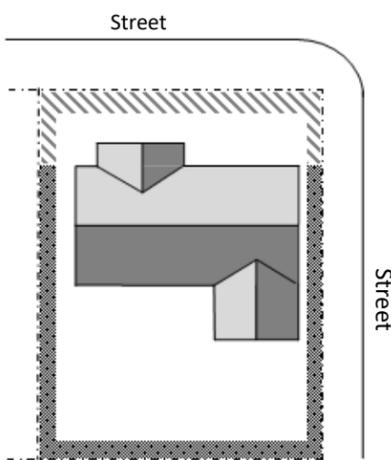
**A:** In residential zones, a solid fence can be up to 4 feet and an open fence can be up to 6 feet (see vision clearance area section) in the front yard area, and 7 feet in all other areas on the property.

In mixed-use zones, solid or open fences can be up to 8 feet anywhere on the property, except solid fences are not allowed between a building and the street.

In industrial and resource-related zones, a solid or open fence can be up to 12 feet anywhere on the property.

**Fence Height in Residential Zone Districts:**

- 4 ft. solid or 6 ft. open fence in front yard area between front building wall and front property line.
- 7 ft. solid or open fence at property line behind front building wall.



**Q5: What materials can I use for my fence?**

**A:** Decorative masonry, ornamental steel or wrought iron, brick, stone, or wood.



**Q6: Are there any prohibited materials?**

- A:**
- Electric fences are allowed only in resource-related zones, and barbed wire is allowed only in industrial and resource-related districts.
  - Chain link and other woven wire fence materials are not allowed in a required front and/or street side setback in a residential zone or between a building and the street in a mixed-use zone.
  - Razor or concertina wire; and, nails, broken glass or other hazardous objects on top of fences or walls.

**Q7: What is a public right-of-way and where is it located in relation to my property line?**

**A:** A public right-of-way is a city-owned strip of land used to accommodate a street, sidewalk, curb and gutter, storm sewer, and utilities etc., and it may include reserved sidewalk areas which have not been developed yet. Sidewalk areas are measured from the face of the curb (the gutter) to the property line. Most City streets have a 12' sidewalk area.



Contact a Planner to determine your sidewalk area.

**Q8: Can I put a fence or wall in the City ROW?**

**A:** Yes, the fence or wall can be up to 36 inches (3 feet) in height, and an encroachment permit must be obtained from Public Works.

See weblink below for more info:

<https://www.ci.eureka.ca.gov/depts/pw/engineering/forms/default.asp>

**Q9: What is a Vision Clearance Area?**

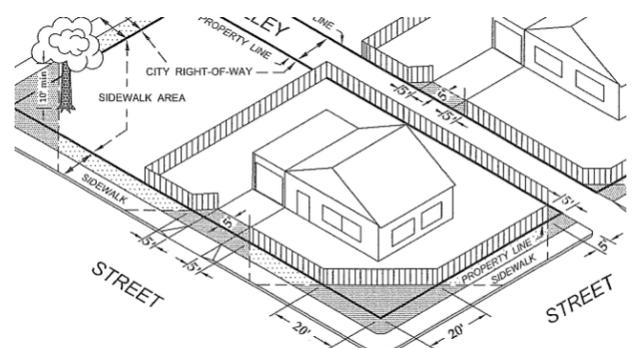
**A:** All intersections of streets, driveways and alleys must provide a Vision Clearance Area (VCA) (AKA: sight visibility triangle) to maintain lines of sight for traffic safety.

A fence, wall, landscaping, etc. may be located in the VCA if it is 36 inches (3 feet) or less in height. Trees pruned 10 feet above the grade of the curb are permitted within a VCA, and a VCA is not required at one-way street intersections.

**Q10: How do I measure a VCA?**

**A: Street Intersections:** Measure 20 feet along the property line from the corner in both directions, and diagonally connect the ends of the two lines to form a triangle.

**Driveways/Alleys:** Measure five feet along the edge of the driveway/alley and the property line from the point of intersection, and diagonally connect the ends of the two lines to form a triangle.



**Questions?**

Please contact the City of Eureka, **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES—PLANNING**, 531 K Street, Eureka, California, 95501-1146  
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